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A JOURNEY TO MEXICO

AGATHA BOYD ADAMS

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CHAPTER I

FIRST GLIMPSES

The shape of Mexico on the map suggests a graceful horn of plenty, a metaphor that seems not too far fetched to one who sees for the first time the fruits and flowers that spill over in Mexican market places. But when the King of Spain asked the conqueror Cortés what the land was like he wadded a piece of paper in his fist and dropped it on the table. Both comparisons are precise: the land of smiling abundant beauty, and the crumpled land, of jagged ravines and towering peaks, menacing to both conqueror and native. It is a topsy-turvy land of contrast and paradox.

No one can fully understand Mexico who takes Europe with him or who goes hoping to find there a transplanted Spain. Many did go with such expectations during the years when it has been impossible to visit old Spain. All who have done so have been disappointed, for Mexico is, even more than the countries to the north of her, a development of the New World, more western than European, more Indian than Spanish, more of the future than of the past. The traveller to Mexico crosses psychological boundaries far deeper and wider than the torpid stretch of mud and silt which we call the Rio Grande. He must be ready to go very far back into unwritten history, but also ready to look forward to the shaping of the world of tomorrow.

The books gathered together for this program have been chosen as helps toward a sympathetic approach to Mexico. They may be used as preparation for a visit there, or as a substitute for such a visit for those who must do their travelling at home.

The Pan American Highway is the most obvious connecting link between the United States and Mexico. Harry Franck and Herbert C. Lanks have described their trip along this highway, and their book may well form an introduction to a study of Mexico, since it provides some quick first impressions, without any attempt at deeper penetration, either geographically or psychologically.

J. B. Trend approached Mexico by air, perhaps the most beautiful of all approaches, although the first view of Orizaba from the Gulf, and the train journey from Vera Cruz to the Capital, also provide a memorable entrance to Mexico. Mr. Trend may be one

of those travellers who went to Mexico hoping for Spain, since he has known Spain long and understood her well, but he is too astute and sophisticated a traveller to let this prejudice influence him. His introduction to modern Mexico has especial value because of his European background, and his knowledge of the heritage of the Spanish conquerors.

1. NATIONAL HIGHWAY NUMBER ONE, MEXICO

Pan American Highway, by Harry A. Franck and Herbert C. Lanks

The first 111 pages of this book describe Mexico. Use the illustrations in the first part of the book to give an idea of what the highway is like, as it gradually ascends from the plains of Texas toward the great Mexican mountains.

Give some of the authors' descriptions of the highway, and their first impressions of the country. Some of these impressions you will wish to check later on with the views of travellers who took more time to learn the country. Stress the fact throughout that this is a quick view.

Discuss briefly the authors' account of Mexico City, the Pyramids, Puebla, Taxco, some of the other towns. To all of these we will return in the course of this program.

Additional Reference:

The Mexico I Like, by J. Frank Dobie

2. A NEW SPAIN WITH OLD FRIENDS

Mexico, by J. B. Trend

The subtitle of Mr. Trend's book contradicts what has been said above, that Mexico is not a new Spain. Bear in mind throughout that Mr. Trend has lived in Spain and written some excellent books about the Peninsula, and that his visit to Mexico was at a time when he must have been homesick for old Spain. Did he find what he wished?

His account of the geography and climate of Mexico is excellent and should be summarized.

Discuss the glimpses of Mexican history which he gives here. Chapters V, VI, and XI.

What features of modern Mexico appeal to him especially? Is he sympathetic toward social reforms?

His comparisons of Spain and Mexico are especially illuminating; discuss them.

Additional Reference:

A Picture of Modern Spain, by J. B. Trend

3. A PHOTOGENIC LAND

Mexico, by Fritz Henle

Even the least artistic visitor to Mexico is apt to long for a brush and some skill with colors to keep forever innumerable eye-catching scenes of street and country. The camera is the best substitute; in such hands as Fritz Henle's it becomes an artist's tool for recording beauty. Show these pictures at the first meeting to begin to get some visual images of the country and people.

CHAPTER II

YEARS OF CONQUEST

The bait of treasure which drew Europeans across the seas to find the New World had more counterpart in fact in Latin America than in the area now the United States. The wretched starving settlers at Jamestown picked up no shiny nuggets, but the Spanish *conquistadores* shipped home gold enough to gild the *retablos* of Spanish cathedrals and stuff the coffers of the king. The story of the treasure that Cortés and his men found in Mexico leads through not clearly deciphered clues far back to a people more remote in time and culture than any other in the western hemisphere.

The history of the Toltecs, the Zapotecs, the Aztecs, successive lords of the valley of Mexico, is still to be written. In the National Museum in Mexico may be seen their records, long scrolls of picture-writing in a language that has not yet been read; there are records of tribal movements, plans of cities, accounts of revenue. Many of the pictures are tinted dark red, suggesting the strain of violence that runs through all Mexican history. In the Museum of Oaxaca are displayed the jewels and art objects discovered in a few of the mounds on Monte Albán; no barbaric jewels these, but queenly necklaces of coral, turquoise, jade and pearls, pectorals of gold filigree, and exquisitely wrought vessels of rock crystal and onyx. The people who made and used these things had taste and appreciation of beauty as well as wealth. How did they live? What did they believe? What records have their poets and wise men left? Perhaps some of these questions may be answered as more of the mounds and ruins on Monte Alban and in other parts of Mexico are stripped of the jungle growth which now conceals them.

Salvador de Madariaga suggests in his life of Cortés that the civilization of the Aztecs was already an ancient and decadent one when the Spaniards came to Mexico. His account of the meeting of Montezuma and Cortés, "two spearheads of two mutually strange civilizations," is one of the most dramatic moments in his biography. Although the past of the Aztecs is still a mystery, the story of the Spanish conquest is well-documented, thanks

chiefly to one of the conquerors, Bernal Diaz de Castillo, who when he was an old man set down the things he had witnessed. In writing his biography of Cortés, which is also a history of the conquest of Mexico, Madariaga has drawn on original sources in addition to the chronicle of Bernal Diaz. The impressive bibliography in the back of his book need not frighten the reader, however, for he has known how to dramatize and make alive the dusty material of history.

In the first part of his *Timeless Mexico*, Hudson Strode gives a very useful and readable account of the Aztecs, and of the conquest. It furnishes a good background for Madariaga's more detailed study.

1. BEYOND AUDACITY

Timeless Mexico, by Hudson Strode (pages 3-80 only)

Give an outline of the prelude "Before Cortés." Refer to what Trend had to say about the Toltecs and Aztecs in his book previously studied.

Justify Strode's phrase for the conquest "Beyond Audacity." Compare the difficulties that beset the Spanish conquerors with the familiar efforts at Jamestown and Plymouth.

Discuss the character of Cortés as he is here presented; emphasize especially his profound conviction of destiny.

Describe the role of Malinche (Marina) in the conquest.

Show how the legend of Quetzalcoatl played into the hands of the Spaniards; how shrewdly Cortés used Montezuma's sense of doom.

"Cortés, more than Columbus, was the superb epitome of his age," says Strode. In what ways?

Additional References:

Conquistador, by Archibald MacLeish (the chronicle of Bernal Diaz translated into modern verse)

The Conquest of Mexico, by William H. Prescott (even though Prescott had never seen Mexico, this remains the classic history)

2. THE RETURN OF QUETZALCOATL

Hernan Cortés; Conqueror of Mexico, by Salvador de Madariaga

Give Madariaga's estimate of Cortés in three aspects: the man, the Catholic, and the conqueror.

Describe the geographical factors which made his march from Vera Cruz to the capital so hazardous.

Give special attention to the meeting of Cortés and Montezuma, epitomizing as each did a world alien to the other.

What is the meaning of Madariaga's phrase "Cortés throws away his conquest?"

Discuss the motives and the methods of the conquest as they are revealed in this biography.

Comment on the closing sentence of the book: "Cortés, great in his achievement, was greater still in that his tragic life is a fit symbol of the tragedy of man on earth."

Additional Reference:

The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico, by Bernal Diaz del Castillo

CHAPTER III

CARAVELS AND CROSSES

The meeting of Cortés and Montezuma has been well described by Madariaga as the meeting of two alien worlds. Cortés was not only a European, but in many ways a typical man of the Renaissance; he was also a typical sixteenth century Spaniard. Spain was on her way to becoming one of the most powerful countries in Europe; her golden age was dawning. The Moors had at last been driven back to Africa; Spain, strengthened by that victory, had begun to stretch toward more conquests. But conquest is costly, and the land had always been poor. One of the great impelling forces of the adventure toward the New World was the urgent need for tangible wealth.

But along with the passion for wealth went another, perhaps an even more fanatic move. Sixteenth century Spain was not only a powerful conqueror but also an intensely devout Catholic. The first settlers came to the North American shore in search of religious freedom; the *conquistadores* came to bring the true religion to the natives. These hard, brave, adventurous and often brutal men were profoundly religious, profoundly confident that their approach to God was the only one, and that any means to convert others to it were divinely justified. They were heirs of the Inquisition, loyal followers of Philip II. Only by understanding this can one even begin to comprehend the motives that prompted their destruction of Aztec books, temples and records, their cruel treatment of Montezuma and his lords, their drive to obliterate an unchristian civilization. It is a fine bit of historical irony that the Indian strain in the end has proved stronger than the Spanish.

Captain from Castile and *Heart of Jade* tell the story of the conquest of Mexico in fiction; both of them balance the dramatic contrasts between sixteenth century Spain and the Aztec empire of the Valley of Mexico.

1. COUNTERPOINT OF TWO WORLDS

Heart of Jade, by Salvador de Madariaga

Comment on the author's technique of contrasting and alternating

pictures of Spain and Mexico. Describe briefly the two countries as he presents them here.

Discuss the diversified strains in Alonso Manrique's inheritance, and show how they were typical of his era. Does he epitomize sixteenth century Spain as Cortés did?

Is there any historical justification for Xuchitl's father being an "advanced thinker"? Refer to Strode, *Timeless Mexico*, and also to Madariaga, *Hernan Cortés*. What elements in Aztec life are represented in Xuchitl's family?

Trace the legend of the White God as the author uses it here.

Compare Madariaga as novelist and biographer; in which role is he more successful? In which of these two books, his biography of Cortés and *Heart of Jade*, do you learn more about Spain? about Mexico? about the conquest?

2. SIXTEENTH CENTURY TREASURE HUNT

Captain from Castile, by Samuel Shellabarger

The setting of these two novels is the same. Compare the authors' different methods of handling it. Which succeeds in making it more vivid and interesting?

Outline the plot briefly so as to be able to contrast it with *The Heart of Jade*.

Which of the two authors is more familiar with his historical material? Which is better able to weave it into a story?

Discuss the uses of the historical novel, as shown in these two books; which do you prefer, your history straight or in the form of fiction?

Additional Reference:

"Azteca," one of the plays in Josephina Niggli's *Mexican Folk Plays*

CHAPTER IV

GROWTH OF A NATION

The Spanish conquerors built churches and cathedrals everywhere in Mexico, in Spanish style and consecrated to the Roman Catholic rite; but the older rites remained too; the dark and mysterious and compelling gods of Mayan and Aztec ritual have never been completely forgotten. The Lady of Guadalupe appeared to an Indian in a dream, and millions worship at the great shrine, but is she the same Virgin who presides over the altar in the Cathedrals of Sevilla and Burgos, or is she Tonantzin, Mayan goddess of fertility?

The imperfect fusing of religions is a symbol of the fusing of the two peoples. Spaniards intermarried with Indians, but the two alien and mutually antipathetic strains persist and perhaps are responsible for the deep psychological cleavages in Mexican life, the tragic conflicts that have marked the whole course of their national history. Revolutionary Mexico turned in violence and bitter hatred against the Church which Spain had brought to the land. Modern Mexico considers the European Spaniard a foreigner, laughs at his Castilian lisp, and ridicules his ways in cartoons and on the vaudeville stage. Yet Spain is intrinsically a part of the Mexican inheritance. The intensity of the long struggle to harmonize the Indian and the Spanish strains has produced something like a national schizophrenia, a divided personality rebelling against itself. No such cleavage occurred in the English-speaking colonies to the north, perhaps because of the more brutal English policy of driving the Indians completely out of their land.

In *Timeless Mexico*, Hudson Strode outlines graphically the years of Mexico's struggle to break away from Spain and to achieve nationhood by blending the contrary racial and cultural heritage. *The Wine of San Lorenzo*, by Herbert Gorman, employs as background for an exciting novel the years of Mexico's war with the United States.

1. REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Timeless Mexico, by Hudson Strode, chapters 6-13

Colonial New Spain: discuss the administration of the colony, con-

trasting it with the British administration of the thirteen original colonies in this country; the conversion of the Indians, pointing out the role of the Virgin of Guadalupe; the "faults and follies" of the colonial governors, during the three centuries of their rule.

Independence: focus the story of Mexico's break from Spain around the priest Miguel Hidalgo.

Show how Mexico's independence meant only the "change from one set of reactionary masters to another."

Strode describes the episode of Santa Ana and the war with the United States as "a tragi-comedy." Why? Discuss it in some detail as a background for later discussion of *The Wine of San Lorenzo*.

Additional Reference:

Mexico and Its Heritage, by Ernest Gruening

2. "MANIFEST DESTINY"

The Wine of San Lorenzo, by Herbert Gorman

Give the setting for this novel in the history of Mexico and the United States.

Does the author present impartially the points of view of both nations in regard to Texas?

Give an outline of the story and discuss his method of setting the story in motion, bringing his hero to Mexico, and to a meeting with Maria Catalina.

Compare the Spaniards as presented here with those in the earlier novels of the conquest.

Comment on the author's understanding of the problems of Mexico and of the Mexican people; on his ability to blend history and fiction.

Discuss the real characters introduced here: Santa Ana and Zachary Taylor.

Does the author have an understanding of the Indian people or is his entire interest in the Spanish element?

Tie this in with Hudson Strode's account of the same period in Mexican history.

CHAPTER V

THE INDIANS AND THE LAND

The visitor to Mexico may see life there at several different levels, according to his own wishes, or his ability to understand. He may go through in a train or car and see Mexico simply on the surface as a land of beauty so extraordinary, of color so overwhelming, that all adjectives become pale and useless in attempting to describe it. In Mexico City the visitor may lead the life of any European capital before the war, with excellent cafés, concerts, glittering shops, and extravagant night clubs to entertain him. He may so insulate himself that he never sees beyond the colors of the landscape and the modern luster of the city. But let him wander a bit in the suburbs of the capital, or go out into the country to some such village as Mitla, shadowed by Aztec temples, whose present-day Indians live behind palisades of organ cactus, and he must become aware of darker implications, of poverty as well as abundance, of ignorance and suffering as well as beauty. The Indians of Mexico have not yet fully come into the inheritance that has been kept from them by centuries of misrule.

It was the Indian way of life in Mexico that fascinated Stuart Chase, and he has used it for a comparison with the machine civilization of the United States. The comparison is stimulating, though the reader should bear in mind that the author shows throughout considerable ignorance of Spain, both historically and socially, and that some of the qualities which he attributes to the Indian heritage are legacies from Spain.

Mauricio Magdaleno is a contemporary Mexican novelist. His *Sunburst* offers a good balance to Stuart Chase's enthusiasm for the machineless village and the folkways of poverty-stricken Indians. *Sunburst* presents with bitter realism, but also with sensitive understanding, the Mexican Indian of the present day, betrayed by one of his rural compatriots and disappointed by the Revolution which promised so much.

1. MEXICAN MIDDLETOWN

Mexico, by Stuart Chase

In the first chapter the author declares his purpose of making a study

of Tepoztlan similar to the Lynds's study of a typical North American town. If possible, take a look at *Middletown* to see how that was done.

Locate Tepoztlan geographically. Could it be called typical of all parts of Mexico?

Some of the chapters in Chase's *Mexico* deal with material already covered in this program, e.g., Mexico before and during the conquest. Skip them, unless the group feels a recapitulation desirable here.

Describe in some detail life in Tepoztlan, as the author interprets it, under these topics: food, drink, shelter, clothing, health, work and play.

Summarize the advantages Mr. Chase sees in the Indian way of life. Do you agree with him at all points? Discuss his tendency to romanticize.

2. THE DISPOSSESSED

Sunburst, by Mauricio Magdaleno

Throughout your discussion of this novel, compare it with Chase's picture of village life, noting that the economist prettifies situations about which the novelist is realistic.

The Indians in San Andres de la Cal are Otomis. From what you have learned in Stuart Chase's book, comment on the isolation of these people. Remember that the Otomis are skilled at weaving and other delicate handicrafts.

Describe life in San Andres de la Cal: the tensions and cross-currents beneath the sleepiness.

Show how the revolution affected this particular village. What were the political attitudes of the Indians? Their feeling toward the Church?

The "Little Coyote" is reminiscent of certain real figures in the Mexican revolution. Show how his career is typical.

Hudson Strode calls it "the most important novel to come out of Mexico recently." Is this praise justifiable?

The excellent translation is by Anita Brenner, one of whose books about Mexico we will study later on. Note that she does not distort English by literal translations of Spanish in the style which Hemingway made popular in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Comment on these two descriptions of *Sunburst*: "the Mexican Grapes of Wrath," and the "best Mexican novel."

Additional Reference:

The Ejido: Mexico's Way Out, by Eyler N. Simpson

VIGNETTES OF MEXICAN LIFE

Only the casual observer can ever see a country as a unit, a definite shape and color on a school map. Upon closer approach every country breaks down into regions and sections, into sharply differentiated localities, towns, villages. There is a strange tendency in the United States to speak of South America as a unit, forgetting the differences of language and politics, of rivers, deserts and mountains which divide it into quite different countries. With equal glibness we generalize about Mexico, skipping over the geographic and climatic and historical factors which divide it into regions. There are three major regions in Mexico: the North bordering on Texas, the central plateau, centered in the capital, and the South, the "Tierra Caliente." If Stuart Chase had lived longer in Mexico, perhaps he would not have been so satisfied to call Tepoztlan a "typical" village.

Two unusual guides to a deeper understanding of Mexico are provided by Josephina Niggli's *Mexican Village*, and Dane Chandos' *Village in the Sun*. The Hidalgo of *Mexican Village* is definitely in the North, the region of Monterrey, which the author has known from childhood. Much less bitter in tone than *Sunburst* it nonetheless conveys the authentic feel and rhythm of village life, with a fine sense of the counterpoint of Spanish and Indian which is so intrinsically Mexican. Dane Chandos' village, although south of Monterrey, is still in the northern region. He sees it through the eyes of the sympathetic and fascinated foreigner, rather than the native. San Andres de la Cal, Hidalgo, Ajijic—each of these closely observed villages is different, yet each is Mexico in miniature.

1. IN THE VALLEY OF THE SABINAS

Mexican Village, by Josephina Niggli

Locate the village in the Monterrey section of northern Mexico; though it is fictitious, it can be placed approximately.

The colorful end papers should be shown at the beginning of an account of this book, and referred to for various place references.

Trace the threads of interest which run all through this group of stories and give unity to the whole.

Select one or two of the stories to tell, in order to give the flavor of the collection.

The author has published one volume of Mexican folkplays, and has written many other plays. Show how her dramatic ability and experience are revealed in these stories.

Comment on what this book has to add to our understanding of:

Mexican village life, relationship between villagers and the Church, exploitation of Mexican wealth by foreigners, the effects of the Revolution, Mexican feeling about the United States.

More than most of the other books studied here, this author brings out the gentle, likable, ridiculous, and fantastic elements in Mexican life. Illustrate from her stories.

2. BY LAKE CHAPALA

Village in the Sun, by Dane Chandos

Stress the fact that this book, like Stuart Chase's, is written by a foreigner who fell in love with a Mexican village. Observe whether or not he shows the same tendency to romanticize.

Select some of the more picturesque incidents. Does the author make you wish to live in Ajijic?

MEXICO PORTRAYED BY HER OWN WRITERS

Mexico, relatively young as a nation, has not yet produced a literature which can rival the richness and abundance and beauty of her ancestor Spain. But Mexico of today has a tremendous interest in books and a growing body of able writers. It is regrettable that so few books by Mexican authors are available in English translation.

In few cities of North America are there more bookshops and more fascinating ones than in Mexico City. This is one aspect of the city that strikes the visitor at once: secondhand bookshops, where there is always the luring chance of picking up some rare or long-sought-after volume, and spacious modern bookshops, where before the war it was easier to find British and European books and periodicals than in the United States. This eagerness for books is bound to bear fruit in the development of more writers. Mexican literature of the future will be worth watching.

In Mauricio Magdaleno's *Sunburst* we had a taste of Mexican fiction in an interpretation of modern Mexico. *The Itching Parrot*, by José Joaquín Fernandez de Lizardi, takes us back to eighteenth and early nineteenth century Mexico. This novel, which has always been extremely popular in Mexico, is a type also beloved in Spain; it is a picaresque novel, or the adventures of a rogue, and thus is a direct heir of such Spanish novels as *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzman Alfarache*, and others. The picaresque novel was always realistic in tone, and the rogue's escapades were used as a commentary on the society of the period. This translation of *The Itching Parrot* has been made by one of the most gifted writers of fiction in the United States; her introduction is a valuable study of Lizardi.

Nayar, a first novel by a young Mexican writer, leads the reader far into the mysterious jungles of the west coast, very far indeed from the eighteenth century semi-European streets of Mexico City. In a sense it is more deeply Indian than any of the other books studied in this program. The author's gift for poetry and feeling for the forest give it a special beauty.

1. AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ROGUE

The Itching Parrot, by José Joaquín Fernandez de Lizardi

Read the Introduction carefully, and summarize it in beginning a review of Lizardi's novel. The Introduction not only gives an entertaining biography of Lizardi, but tells a great deal about the Mexico of that era. Recount the story of the author's life, and show what it reveals of the social and political trends of his day. Katherine Anne Porter calls Lizardi a hero; why?

The novel itself may be dipped into almost anywhere, since it is very episodic in style. It is not necessary to read all of it, but select some of the chapters that seem especially interesting, for instance the accounts of Poll's childhood and early years. Comment on these as literary narratives, and also as social documents.

Read aloud some sections. Comment on the skill of the translator. Does the English seem stilted?

Can you account for the continuing popularity of this novel of the past?

2. TWENTIETH CENTURY JUNGLE DWELLERS

Nayar, by Miguel Angel Mendez

Describe the setting and background of the novel.

Tell the story of Ramón's flight and the reasons for it.

What points does the story bring out about the life of the Indians, their superstitions, their hardships? Does the author make their life seem idyllic?

Illustrate the author's poetic feeling for the great forests. Does he remind you of W. H. Hudson, in *Green Mansions*?

Compare the Indians as shown here with those in other novels previously read, such as *Sunburst*.

MEXICO PORTRAYED BY FOREIGN NOVELISTS

The drama that began when Cortés and Montezuma met has been enacted over and over again in the centuries since: the clash of European and Indian, Spaniard and Aztec, the Old World and the New, merging not always gradually into the age-old conflict between rulers and the oppressed, those who have neither land nor power, and those who have misused both. So intense is this drama, played against the colorful backdrop of a singularly beautiful land, that it is surprising that more novelists have not chosen it as a setting. There have been very few good novels about Mexico by North American writers; there will probably be a great many more, now that travel between the two countries is again possible. The novelist who writes about a foreign land accepts several handicaps; few writers, for instance, are as familiar with a country not their own as Pearl Buck was with China when she wrote *The Good Earth*. Yet the temptation is strong to set a story among scenes that seem by the very quality of their foreignness to enhance and intensify the action.

Alice Tisdale Hobart has become familiar to her readers through her novels about China, in which country she has lived. In *The Peacock Sheds His Tail* she shows herself a very skilful interpreter of present-day Mexico, with considerable understanding of the historical sources of current conflicts. Her ability as a story-teller enables her to weave an absorbing tale out of many intricate threads. Helen Botsford's *Ashes of Gold* is a much simpler and less ambitious novel, focused mainly on the theme of the exploitation of Mexican wealth and Mexican natives by outsiders. The author has great sympathy for and genuine insight into the plight of the *peones*, and her book, written almost entirely from their point of view, offers an interesting contrast to *The Peacock Sheds His Tail*, in which most of the leading characters are creoles.

House of the Roses, by Charlotte Baker, provides a gay and somewhat superficial but nonetheless authentic picture of the Europeanized life of Mexico City, with overtones of international

intrigue, a striking contrast to some of the novels of village life previously read.

1. HEIRS OF CORTÉS

The Peacock Sheds His Tail, by Alice Tisdale Hobart

The Navarro family is the core of this novel. Explain their social position in modern Mexico, their beliefs, their standards, their way of living. Give some account of each member of the family as the story begins.

Tell the story of Concha and Jim, showing how through her marriage Concha was drawn into the conflicts of her troubled country.

Compare the Catholicism of Don Julian and of his daughter, Concha's mother. What does "Mamá" stand for throughout the novel? What comment on the religious struggle is implicit in this story?

Bring out other issues which are dramatized here, such as: expropriation by foreign business interests, land reform, education, labor, *sinarquismo*, the role of the Spanish *Falange* in Mexico. Does the author tend to over-simplify these very complex problems? Does she add to your understanding of them?

Comment on the author's interpretation of Mexico. Does she succeed as well as she had with China in her earlier novels? As a touchstone in answering this, compare *The Peacock Sheds His Tail*, with some of the novels by Mexican writers previously read (*Mexican Village*, for instance).

Additional Reference:

Inherit the Earth, by Margaret Cochran Shedd (Mexico is not given as the setting here, but it is a very similar country)

2. AND STILL THE QUEST FOR GOLD

Ashes of Gold, by Helen V. Botsford

Note that this is the first novel of a very young writer who has lived in Mexico.

Compare it with the first chapter in *Mexican Village* which also is about the foreign exploitation of mines.

Note how the theme of the quest for treasure has run all through Mexican history.

Describe the primitive communism of *cenizas del oro*, and show how this was disturbed by the coming of the Germans.

Comment on the successful exploration here of the causes of the revolution. What are the basic needs of the *peones* as shown here?

Comment on the author's ability to present the primitive point of

view. Does she have an equal understanding of the Spanish or creole element in Mexican life? From this point of view, compare *The Peacock Sheds His Tail* with *Ashes of Gold*.

Compare village life as revealed here with that in *Sunburst*.

2. THE GLITTERING CITY

House of the Roses, by Charlotte Baker

Sketch briefly the background of the story, Mexico City, just prior to World War II.

Tell the story, bringing out the author's scheme of reaching back into Mexican history for her plot of buried treasure, and into the present for Nazi intrigue. From the other books about Mexico which you have read, do these sources of plot seem plausible?

Comment on the author's understanding of Mexico as compared with other books read. Does she attempt to throw any light on current issues, or content herself with telling a story?

Describe life in the capital as it is presented here, noting the fact that this is only one phase of that life.

Sum up what these three novels have to contribute to a knowledge of Mexico.

Additional Reference:

Mrs. Morton of Mexico, by Arthur Davison Ficke (a delightful novel, now out of print)

ARTISTS IN MEXICO

Mexico has been described as a land where flowers are more important than automobiles. In the markets great sheafs of tuberoses, calla lilies, carnations, bunches of pansies, violets and gardenias, are to be had for a few pesos. At Xochimilco Mexican men and women sit in barges with heaps of flowers on their laps, just to enjoy their color and fragrance as they float along on the shady canals. In Mexico it is not necessary to do anything with flowers so pompous and utilitarian as to "arrange" them; it is enough to touch their cool petals and to absorb their loveliness. The whole country is drenched with the color of flowers and fruits; even the houses in small towns are pink and green and pale yellow and blue, and the tiled rooftops have the soft red of those mushrooms known as "russulas." The mountains add their colors to the pattern, dark purple and snow white, and on their lower slopes the true Mexican colors of jade and turquoise and obsidian. All of these natural colors are repeated in the clothes and crafts of the people with endless variations. The colors of Mexico are different from those of any European country; they are tropical, violent, steeped in sudden rain or washed over with clear sunlight that always has a newly minted look.

Small wonder that such a country should have a compelling attraction for artists, who may despair of catching its colors on canvas, but find the attempt fascinating. Many artists from the United States have found the Mexican way of life so much to their taste that they have settled there; others return to it again and again for inspiration. Addison Burbank in *Mexican Frieze* tells of his journey through Mexico from the point of view of an artist, delighting in the whole experience. His illustrations, both woodcuts and colored, form an integral part of his contribution to an understanding of Mexico. Guido Rosa, also an artist, used the camera to catch the picturesqueness of Mexico and cultivated his ability as a listener to bring forth the stories of the people he met. The result is a unique book.

1. LAND OF COLOR

Mexican Frieze, by Addison Burbank

Call attention to the end papers, which give a map of the author's trip. Note that he visited many places which have been mentioned previously in this program.

The book is too episodic in character to need any extended discussion. Rather select some of the incidents which seem especially interesting and tell them, relating them if possible to other parts of this program.

The section on Oaxaca and Monte Alban describes a part of Mexico not frequently visited by tourists, and gives some interesting clues to Mexican history before the conquest. Devote some attention to it.

Comment on the meaning of the phrase "Yesterday in the Land of Tomorrow." How does it apply to Mexico?

Anita Brenner has said that writers about Mexico can be divided into two classes: those who think that Mexicans are people and those who don't. To which of these does this book belong?

2. A SPEAKING LIKENESS

Mexico Speaks, by Guido Rosa

Give some account of where the author went on the trip to Mexico described here. Comment on his method of travel, and his attitude toward the people and the country. How had he prepared himself for this trip? Note the help derived from his knowledge of Spanish.

Describe the Mexican people as he presents them, their special qualities of gentleness, friendliness, humor, gaiety, endurance, lack of tension. Use incidents from the book to illustrate these. Do the character studies of Mexicans tally with characteristics in the Mexican novels read?

Comment on the prominence of proverbs in the speech of the people, remembering that this is also a characteristic of peninsular Spanish. Quote some of the proverbs.

Show how the pictures expand the meaning of the book.

FOLK ART AND FOLK PLAYS

"Mexico has become established as another of the major artistic provinces of the world."

The heritage and tradition of art in Mexico is a very long one. Some reference has been made to the art forms of the Indian races who ruled Mexico before the conquest. No one can look at the great pyramids at Teotihuacan, or the ruined temples at Mitla, without becoming aware that these are relics of a race who with strength and dignity and precision built structures worthy of the mountains which surround them. In the Hall of the Monoliths in the National Museum are to be seen the incredible fragments of those mighty temples and places which were destroyed to give way to the baroque cathedrals of the Spanish conquerors; these statues and vessels of basalt and limestone are the highly stylized art forms of a strong and ceremonial race, with a well-developed sense of artistic values.

The Spaniard demolished Indian art and architecture because they represented heathen rites and beliefs. Instead he brought in the profoundly Catholic and increasingly baroque art of seventeenth century Spain. The mingling of the two has produced some strange results, as when we find Aztec symbols, reminiscent of those at Mitla, decorating a Christian church, or a Madonna woven delicately of plumes in the ancient Indian manner.

As Stuart Chase has pointed out in his *Mexico*, Mexican civilization is essentially a handcraft civilization, and Mexican art is essentially folk art. The crafts of the people repeat the flower and fruit colors in which the country is steeped; they follow intricate traditional patterns handed down for centuries; in jugs and vases, in serapes, in vessels of tin and of silver, the Mexican craftsman expresses the sense of beauty which is his by inheritance. His work is unhurried; he will lavish as much pains and care on a mirror of tin as on a chalice of silver.

Mexican art of today reveals a mingling of all the vari-colored strands of Indian and Spanish influence, with the social consciousness of a newly awakened proletarian nation. The great murals of Diego Rivera, Orozco and others, are satire, journalism, his-

tory and propaganda as well as painting; through their splashes of color and rhythmic designs the illiterate may drink in the background and purposes of the continuing revolution.

Deeply interwoven in Mexican life is a sense of the theatre, to be found in the side-walk puppet shows, in the ritual and ceremonial dances, with their traditional costumes peculiar to each region, in the masks and processions and celebrations of local festivities. Yet the formal theatre has not yet become a natural vehicle of expression in Mexico, as painting and the other plastic arts. A nation with so much drama in its daily life must inevitably one day seek to express it in the theatre; here, as in so many other ways, Mexico is a land of the future.

1. A NATION WITH A GENIUS FOR BEAUTY

Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art, by the Museum of Modern Art

The Introduction gives a good summary and evaluation of Mexican art. Outline it first, stressing the special values brought out here.

Discuss Mexican art under the following topics: Pre-Spanish Art; Colonial Art; Folk Art; Modern Art. In taking up each section, illustrate with photographs. Use also information gained from other books studied in this program.

Additional Reference:

Idols Behind Altars, by Anita Brenner

2. A COUNTRY THAT IS ALL THEATRE

"Theatre in Mexico," edited by Miguel Covarrubias, in *Theatre Arts Monthly*, August, 1938

Review first the articles about the Mexican theatre in the *Theatre Arts Monthly* as a background for an appreciation of the folk plays.

Outline your review under the following topics:

Pre-Hispanic dance and theatre

Pastoral and popular performances

Present-day Mexican theatre: meaning of "the real theatre of Mexico takes place offstage"

Mexican films

Comedians

Experimental plays

3. A MEXICAN POET IN THE THEATRE

Mexican Folk Plays, by Josephina Niggli

The foreword by Rodolfo Usigli should be summarized for its intelligent approach to the theatre in Mexico. Discuss the facts which he brings out, that the theatre is not as natural a form of expression for the Mexican creative artist as the plastic arts.

In the preliminary article, "Playmaker of Mexico," Mr. Koch has given all the information that you will need about the author, and a brief summary of each of the plays contained in this volume.

Select one play to read aloud.

Are these really folk plays? Compare them with the author's stories in *Mexican Village*. In which form do you think she is more successful?

REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO

In the Monte de Piedad, the government-owned and operated pawnshop in Mexico City, there was for sale a few years ago a blue-robed statue of the Virgin, a Mater Dolorosa, with a price tag of 1500 pesos; "It is not likely," read the sign behind her, "that many of this kind will be carved again." Down a narrow street an ancient church tower, Spanish baroque, is silhouetted against the mountains, above the roofs of shops, but no church is beneath it. Instead, under the mouldering saints, opens a modern garage, with automobiles installed in the apse. Cars are parked in the patios of aristocratic vice-regal mansions, their coats of arms still visible above the archway. In the National Museum the golden crosses, the monstrances and chalices of the Cathedral are exhibited along with Aztec ritual stones as relics of the past. Modern Mexico has revolted against the Church, against foreign landlords, against the Spanish owners of great estates; modern Mexico claims the land and its wealth for the people, the Indians.

The visitor is everywhere aware of Mexico as a self-consciously proletarian nation; in a popular comedian's ridiculing of Spanish manners, Spanish poetry, Spanish airs and graces; in the Sunday morning workmen's symphony concerts in the Palace of Fine Arts, crowded with Indians in working clothes; in the fact that all national monuments and museums are open to the people without charge, and that the people use them; in the revolutionary murals in modern school buildings, which show in vivid colors the evils of the old system and the benefits of the new.

The last half of Hudson Strode's *Timeless Mexico* gives the background of the Mexican revolution and evaluates its significance. Anita Brenner, herself a Mexican as well as a writer of great ability, provides in *The Wind That Swept Mexico* a concise and well-balanced history of the revolution.

1. BACKGROUND OF PROLETARIAN MEXICO

Timeless Mexico, by Hudson Strode (Part Six to the end)

Summarize Strode's account of the Diaz regime. Discuss Diaz's at-

titude toward foreign ownership and exploitation of Mexico's resources. What role did Madero play? Villa? Obregon? Carranza?

"The Mexican revolution is not over yet," says Waldo Frank. Show the reasons for this. Comment on Calles' contribution in carrying the Revolution further.

Strode dubs Cardenas the "redeemer of forgotten men." Why? Discuss his regime in view of the above statement.

Summarize the achievements of the Cardenas government, emphasizing his aims, and his accomplishments.

Discuss anti-clericalism in Mexico, as the author interprets it here; the reasons for it, the method of expressing it. Has there been recently a more liberal attitude toward the Church?

Comment on Strode's analysis of the attitude of Mexico toward the United States. What reasons has Mexico to fear and distrust this country? Give some account of Morrow's ambassadorship, and that of Josephus Daniels. Note the present leadership of Ezequiel Padilla.

Additional Reference:

Mexico; the Making of a Nation, by H. C. Herring

2. REVOLUTION FROM WITHIN

The Wind That Swept Mexico, by Anita Brenner

Comment on the author's special equipment for interpreting Mexico to the United States. Note her list of sources at the end of the book.

In exactly one hundred pages she has packed a complete history of the years from 1910 to 1942. Tell the story as she does, emphasizing any points of difference with the same years as covered in Hudson Strode's book.

"We are not safe in the United States, now and henceforth, without taking Mexico into account," says Miss Brenner. Is this still true in these postwar years? Discuss the statement.

Comment on Miss Brenner's interpretation of such aspects of the revolution as anti-clericalism, land reform, expropriation, education, *sinarquismo*.

How does the author analyze Mexico's attitude toward World War II? What does she say of future relations between the United States and Mexico?

George Leighton's photographs, with Anita Brenner's captions, amplify the brief account of the revolution. Use some of the more striking pictures to illustrate your review.

Additional Reference:

The Ejido; Mexico's Way Out, by Eyler Simpson (A very detailed study of the problems of land reform)

LAND OF THE FUTURE

In the preceding chapters we have tried to explore the rich and mysterious past of Mexico, to trace some of her history, to gain some impressions of the outward aspects of the land and of the nature of her present-day conflicts, and some introduction to an understanding of her people, our next-door neighbors. Mexico has been repeatedly spoken of as a land of the future; the great process of welding Indian and European civilizations, Christian and Aztec ideals, is still going on; the Mexican revolution is still in progress. Everywhere in Mexico, even where the shadows of prehistoric monuments fall across the plain, the alert visitor feels the stirring of a new world, a nation just becoming aware of its own strength and confident enough to experiment in new ways of living.

"If you can understand Mexico, you can understand any place in the world," the Danish minister said to Betty Kirk. By the same touchstone, an understanding of Mexico may be a guide to at least a glimpse into the future of the world; enacted here in miniature though nonetheless intensely has been a segment of the global struggle between fascism and democracy, and Mexico—so think some who know her best—has already found the solution in the middle ground of socialism.

Betty Kirk's *Covering the Mexican Front* is written from genuine knowledge of modern Mexico, and with a passionate conviction that Mexico "is winning a battle which is not only a victory for herself, but a victory for every freedom-loving nation." Perhaps the most important contribution of this book is that it relates Mexico to the present world situation as no other book does. Ezequiel Padilla has already been introduced to us by Hudson Strode as one of the leaders of thought, not only in his own country, but in the western hemisphere. His *Free Men of America*, an idealistic and highminded expression of the role of the western democracies in the post-war world, may well be used to project into the future our study of Mexico.

1. "FRAGMENT OF A LARGER MOSAIC"

Covering the Mexican Front, by Betty Kirk

The Introduction, by Josephus Daniels, gives some information about

the author's special qualifications to write this book, and should be summarized at the beginning.

Comment on the limitations of the book; what part of Mexican history does she set out to cover?

Following her chapter headings, take up some of the issues in modern Mexico, such as: land, labor, oil, education. Show how Betty Kirk interprets these, and compare with comments on the same problems in other books previously read.

Discuss her comments on the following: Leon Trotsky, Henry Wallace, Avilla Camacho; their role in the Mexican Revolution.

Comment on the meaning of her subtitle, "The Battle of Europe vs. America." How is this shown in Mexico?

What does she think of the working out of the "Good Neighbor Policy?" Discuss her "Outline for Peace."

Read Archibald MacLeish's definition of democracy as given in Betty Kirk's Foreword, and apply it to Mexico.

Additional Reference:

Next-Door Neighbor, Mexico, by Sydney Greenbie

2. "FAR AS HUMAN EYE COULD SEE"

Free Men of America, by Ezequiel Padilla

Give a summary of Carleton Beals's Preface, noting who Carleton Beals is, and why he was asked to write this preface.

In the quotation from Avila Camacho on the fly-leaf he speaks of the Americas as having a "continental doctrine of equality, of law, of mutual respect and decorum." Do you think this is true?

Comment on Padilla's rapid survey of Mexican history, showing the reasons for his belief in the destiny of the free man of America.

Observe the usage of the word "American" here, and in other books studied in this program. Do you find any arrogance in our use of the word as applied only to citizens of the United States? What service might be done to the "Good Neighbor Policy" by expanding our interpretation of this word?

Carleton Beals says that Padilla's book "concerns itself first and last with human liberty in all its aspects." Illustrate from the book by giving some of his concepts of liberty and democracy.

Discuss his amplification of the Four Freedoms; his extension of them into the economic sphere. Is this extension necessary in order that they may become effective?

Comment on his attitude toward the Monroe Doctrine, and his amplification of that into Pan Americanism.

Describe the destiny of the Americas as Padilla envisages it.

Additional Reference:

A Time for Greatness, by Herbert Agar (A similar affirmation of the democratic faith, from the United States)

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Numerals refer to chapters in which titles are used

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Botsford, H. V.	<i>Ashes of Gold.</i> 1942. (8)	Dodd	2.50
Brenner, Anita	<i>Wind That Swept Mexico.</i> 1943. (11)	Harper	3.75
Burbank, Addison	<i>Mexican Frieze.</i> 1940. (9)	Coward	3.00
Chandos, Dane	<i>Village in the Sun.</i> 1945. (6)	Putnam	2.75
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Covarrubias, Miguel	"Theatre in Mexico." Aug., 1938. (10)	<i>Theatre Arts</i> <i>Monthly</i>	
De Lizardi, J.J.F.	<i>The Itching Parrot.</i> 1942. (7)	Doubleday	2.50
Franck & Lanks	<i>Pan American Highway.</i> 1940. (1)	Appleton	5.00
Gorman, Herbert	<i>Wine of San Lorenzo.</i> 1945. (4)	Farrar	3.00
Henle, Fritz	<i>Mexico.</i> 1945. (1)	Ziff-Davis	4.00
Hobart, A. T.	<i>The Peacock Sheds His Tail.</i> 1945. (8)	Bobbs	2.75
Kirk, Betty	<i>Covering the Mexican Front.</i> 1942. (12)	Univ. of Okla.	3.00
Madariaga, S. de	<i>Heart of Jade.</i> 1944. (3)	Creative Age	3.00
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Magdaleno, M.	<i>Sunburst.</i> 1943. (5)	Viking	2.50
Menendez, M. A.	<i>Nayar.</i> 1945. (7)	Farrar	2.50
Niggli, Josephina	<i>Mexican Folk Plays.</i> 1938. (10)	U.N.C. Press	2.50
Niggli, Josephina	<i>Mexican Village.</i> 1945. (6)	U.N.C. Press	3.00
Padilla, Ezequiel	<i>Free Men of America.</i> 1943. (12)	Ziff-Davis	2.50
Rosa, Guido	<i>Mexico Speaks.</i> 1944. (9)	John Day	3.00
Shellabarger, S.	<i>Captain from Castile.</i> 1945. (3)	Blakiston	3.00
Strode, Hudson	<i>Timeless Mexico.</i> 1944. (2, 4, 11)	Harcourt	3.50
Trend, J. B.	<i>Mexico.</i> 1941. (1)	Macmillan	2.50
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Ficke, A. D.	<i>Mrs. Morton of Mexico.</i> 1939. (8)	Reynal	2.50
Greenbie, Sydney	<i>Next-Door Neighbor.</i> 1942. (12)	Row, Peterson	.56
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ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHERS

The following publishers have books listed in this outline, and opportunity is here taken to thank those who have generously given review copies of the books used and recommended.

Numerals in parentheses indicate chapters in which the books are used.

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- Bobbs-Merrill Co., 725 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis 7. (8)
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- Creative Age Press, 11 E. 44th St., New York 17. (3)
- Dodd, Mead & Co., 432 Fourth Ave., New York 16. (8)
- Doubleday, Doran & Co., Garden City, N. Y. (7)
- Dutton (E. P.) & Co., 300 Fourth Ave., New York 10. (8)
- Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 232 Madison Ave., New York 16. (4, 7)
- Foreign Policy Assn., 8 W. 40th St., New York 18. (11)
- Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., 383 Madison Ave., New York 17. (2, 4, 10, 11)
- Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33rd St., New York 16. (8, 11)
- Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park St., Boston 7. (1, 2)
- John Day Co., 2 W. 45 St., New York 19. (9)
- Little, Brown & Co., 227 S. 6th St., Boston 6. (12)
- Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Ave., New York 11. (1, 2, 5)
- Modern Library, 20 E. 57th St., New York 22. (2)
- Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St., New York 19. (10)
- Putnam's (G. P.) Sons, 2 W. 45th St., New York 19. (6)
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- Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas (1)
- Theatre Arts Monthly*, Theatre Arts, Inc., 130 W. 56th St., New York 19. (10)
- University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. (3, 5, 6, 10)
- University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma. (12)
- Viking Press, Inc., 18 E. 48th St., New York 17. (5)
- Ziff-Davis Publishing Co., 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. (1, 12)

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

First Meeting: FIRST GLIMPSES

1. National Highway Number One, Mexico
2. A New Spain with Old Friends
3. A Photogenic Land

Second Meeting: YEARS OF CONQUEST

1. Beyond Audacity
2. The Return of Quetzalcoatl

Third Meeting: CARAVELS AND CROSSES

1. Counterpoint of Two Worlds
2. Sixteenth Century Treasure Hunt

Fourth Meeting: GROWTH OF A NATION

1. Revolution and Counter-revolution
2. "Manifest Destiny"

Fifth Meeting: THE INDIANS AND THE LAND

1. Mexican Middletown
2. The Dispossessed

Sixth Meeting: VIGNETTES OF MEXICAN LIFE

1. In the Valley of the Sabinas
2. By Lake Chapala

Seventh Meeting: MEXICO PORTRAYED BY HER OWN WRITERS

1. An Eighteenth Century Rogue
2. Twentieth Century Jungle Dwellers

Eighth Meeting: MEXICO PORTRAYED BY FOREIGN NOVELISTS

1. Heirs of Cortés
2. And Still the Quest for Gold
3. The Glittering City

Ninth Meeting: ARTISTS IN MEXICO

1. Land of Color
2. A Speaking Likeness

Tenth Meeting: FOLK ART AND FOLK PLAYS

1. A Nation with a Genius for Beauty
2. A Country That Is All Theatre
3. A Mexican Poet in the Theatre

Eleventh Meeting: REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO

1. Background of Proletarian Mexico
2. Revolution from Within

Twelfth Meeting: LAND OF THE FUTURE

1. "Fragment of a Larger Mosaic"
2. "Far as Human Eye Could See"

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Adventures in Reading, Seventh Series. C. S. Love. January 1935. No. 2*
Below the Potomac. M. N. Bond. April 1935. No. 3*
Europe in Transition. Phillips Russell & C. M. Russell. May 1935. No. 4*
Other People's Lives, Fourth Series. C. S. Love. June 1935. No. 5*
The Story of Books. R. B. Downs. July 1935. No. 6*

VOLUME II

- Adventures with Music and Musicians.* A. D. McCall. October 1935. No. 1
Famous Women of Yesterday and Today. Revised Edition. C. S. Love.
January 1936. No. 2*
Adventures in Reading, Eighth Series. M. N. Bond. April 1936. No. 3*
Other People's Lives, Fifth Series. C. S. Love. May 1936. No. 4
Adventures in Reading, Ninth Series. A. B. Adams. June 1936. No. 5
Modern Plays and Playwrights. C. M. Russell. July 1936. No. 6

VOLUME III

- Adventures Around the World.* Lucile Kelling. October 1936. No. 1*
The Modern Woman. E. C. Baity. January 1937. No. 2*
Literary Backgrounds of Present Day Germany. A. E. Zucker and W. P.
Friederich. April 1937. No. 3
India in Revolution. E. E. and E. E. Ericson. May 1937. No. 4
Adventures in Reading, Tenth Series. A. B. Adams. June 1937. No. 5*
The Theatre Today. M. G. Holmes. July 1937. No. 6

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- Other People's Lives, Sixth Series.* C. S. Love. October 1937. No. 1
American Humor. E. C. Downs & R. B. Downs. January 1938. No. 2
Contemporary Poetry. Lucile Kelling. April 1938. No. 3*
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